

REMARKS

*Upon some QUERIES Handed about by the
Separate Traders to AFRICA.*

THERE is no Doubt, but according to the Proverb, *A Fool may ask more Questions in an Hour, than all the Wise Men in the World can answer in Seven Year.* But, when Men ask Questions meerly to puzzle and perplex those that have not made themselves Masters of the Case, it may be useful to the World to expose the Folly of the Performance, in order to discover the Knavery of the Design.

The Confusion which the Passion of the Querists threw them into, at the forming these Queries, has oblig'd us to fort them for 'em a little, and answer them in Heads; that when they ask the same Question three or four times over, one Answer may serve for all; and the Reader may not be oblig'd to a wild Goose Chase after the Enquirer's Nonsense, wherefore we shall put their Queries in the Margin, and speak to them in Course.

And first they ask,

Whether 'tis not great Modesty in the African Company's Creditors, to petition for the sole Trade of Africa, and most of America, only?

Whether the said Creditors know those Trades by Inspiration, and desire therefore that the experienc'd Traders be excluded?

Whether 'tis not thro' a tender Regard to the Good of the Nation, lest the African Trade should be lost, that induces the said Creditors to petition the House for an Exclusive Trade?

any Meaning in these Words, *viz. most of America only*; and Lastly, what Relation these Questions have to any of the Company's Proceedings?

It is evident, the Company never petition'd for any sole Trade, or to exclude the separate Traders, or any Body else; they never ask'd to be *The Company* exclusive, but that *A Company* might be establish'd with necessary exclusive Privileges. They freely offer'd to lay open Books for new Subscriptions, they were always content the whole Nation should come in; they offer'd at a New Company, and only desir'd to come in with them for their just Share in the Subscription, according to what the real Value they should bring in, would amount to; and several Proposals of this Kind have from the Beginning been made by them; So that these Questions are not only Nonsense in the Expression, but false and fallacious in the Suggestion.

Then they ask,

Whether a Trade can be said to be lost, wherein there are employ'd 70 odd Ships, under the Management of 3 or 400 skilful Merchants, Planters and others, who are both Owners and Freighters themselves?

Whether such who are at 4 or 5000 l. per Ann. Charge, to fit out 3 or 4 Ships a Year, can afford to sell Negroes cheaper than those who are not at 500 l. per Ann. Charge to fit out twenty times that Number of Ships?

We Answer;

If it were good Arguing, to answer a Question with a Question, these might be answer'd effectually, by asking them, if they can make Sense of these Questions; where the Connexion of them is to be found; and if it was to be put into Latin, which would be the Principle Verb? For Example, where the Coherence lies between having a Company Establish'd, and the Creditors having the sole Trade to *Africa*; between knowing the Trade by Inspiration, or any way, and excluding the separate Traders; and if they had

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To this we Answer;

These Questions are all of a Kind, and only put several Ways, to help raise the Dust, make a Clamour, and amuse the People with the Variety.

The short Answer here, is, supposing these Men who modestly say of themselves, that they are Men of *the best Credit*, can do all they pretend to, and are as many as they call themselves, *viz.* That they send out above 70 Ships, employ 700000 l.

Whether 'tis not much better for the Benefit of the *Woollen Manufacture* to export 4000 Pieces of *Perpetuana's* a Year under an exclusive Company, or 35000 Pieces under an open Trade?

Whether 'tis not better for the Plantations, that they and the Spaniards be furnish'd with 5150 Negroes a Year in time of Peace, by an exclusive Company, than with 20000 Negroes a Year under an open Trade?

The Question is this ;

How many Ships would these *skilful Merchants of the best Credit* have set out ; How much Stock employ'd ; How many *Perpetuana's* have exported ; How many Negroes have carry'd ; If the Company having been demolish'd, and their *useless* Forts and Castles being thrown up, or maintain'd after their Manner only, they had been left to the open Trade they pretend to ? And if in Answer to this, they with Assurance say as they have done, *as many as before* : Why then, have they not offered long ago to the Parliament, to come and give Security in their private Capacities to perform this, and to continue to do so for Twenty Years ? Which if they had thought safe to do, they had infallibly carry'd their Cause long ago ; and may still perhaps, if they could come into this Proposal ; but it is not possible for them to do it, and they are, as they say of themselves, too *Skilful Merchants* to come into such a Noose.

This is plain from the Method they take to banter the Notion with a Security in any kind, as may appear in five of their Queries put together, as follows :

Then they ask,

Whether any Trade was ever lost by being laid open, for want of Security given for carrying it on ; as the Eastland, Hamburgh, French, Spanish, Portugal and Russia Trades ? Or whether the Greenland Trade was not entirely lost by being made Exclusive ?

17. *Or why was there no Security demanded of the Turkey Merchants for their carrying on the Trade, when they were establish'd under a regulated Company ?*

What Security can there be, that our Foreign Trade should be better carry'd on by the Gentlemen of Exchange-Alley, than by the most skilful Merchants in Britain ?

What Security can there be, if an Exclusive African Trade should be granted to the said Gentlemen of Exchange-Alley, that they would not sell out their Stock, and leave others to perform the Bargain which they had made ?

Or what Security can there be, that they will not divide out their Stock among themselves, as they have now by Bottomree Bonds, and thereby render the imaginary Security a Dream ?

a Company at *New Plymouth* : That *Virginia*, being settled and planted by a Company, and then parcelled out to private Persons in open Trade, was overthrown by the Savages, the poor Planters Massacred, and their whole Trade Destroy'd ; and the Forts and Castles of the Company being a Refuge for the few that escaped, the Company was fain to re-assume the Plantations, for recovering and preserving the Trade.

They might also know, that in the Islands, their Security from the Beginning was in a general Extirpation of the Natives, and that where on the Continent those Natives have not been destroy'd, they have frequent and bloody Wars with them, to the great Loss and Destruction of the Inhabitants, as at *New England, New York, Virginia, Carolina*, and the like ; all which Colonies are supported purely by the Multitude and Strength of their People ; and which Strength grew to be sufficient under the first Power

700000 *l.* Export 35000 Pieces of *Perpetuana's*, and are themselves 3 or 400 Merchants, Planters, &c. and *Skilful* ones too ; all which is a meer Chimera, and impos'd upon the World without any Proof. But grant it all, that we may give them full Scope ; one Question will confound them all, and they are desir'd to lay their *skilful* Heads together, and answer it if they can.

We Answer ;

These are evident Struggles to shift and shuffle off the main Point, *viz.* of giving Security to the Nation for preserving the Trade, which still it is evident they cannot do, and which a Regular Incorporated Company can do, and no other.

As to the laying open of other Trades, such as they Instance, the Answer is so plain, and has been so often given, that it is needless to repeat it, *viz.* That they are settled among Christian Governments, not among Heathens and Savages. That Companys were needful only to begin and introduce those Trades, and then the respective Government of those Countries, found it their Interest to take them into their Protection.

On the other Hand, were not these *skilful Planters and Merchants* ignorant of the History and Original of those very Colonies they pretend to understand so well, they might know, that the Colony of *New England* was twice destroy'd in an open Trade, and at last, settled by

Power of (and till which they had been lost without the Assistance and Support of) *such exclusive Company's.*

Their pretence of the *Greenland* Trade being lost by being in a Company, is equally Fallacious, and just contrary ; for the *Greenland* Trade was first lost by the being *laid open*, and for want of a Company, in the Years 1669, and to 1672, when the *Dutch* War finish'd its Ruin : It was attempted again in 1694, by a Company who have not met with Success, but left it no worse than they found it ; and since it now may be left open, Why do not Separate Traders try if they can recover it ?

After these Things have been thrown in their Faces, their Ignorance of which manifestly exposes them, Why do not these *Skilful Merchants* tell the World, when any considerable New Trade, Plantation, or Improvement in the World, has been begun without a Company ? And how a Separate Trading would have begun the Trade to *Africa* ?

If indeed they will undertake to Transplant Numbers of People to *Africa* ; Plant and People the Country, destroy, or drive up into the Mountains the Numerous Savage Natives, and so put themselves in a Posture to live there upon their own Strength, without Support from hence ; tho' that Way of Planting *Africa*, might Ruin the Negroe Trade, yet it might take off something of the Necessity of a Company ; but while they are surrounded with Populous Nations, of whom they never yet saw any End, or knew the Number ; all Savage, Barbarous, Treacherous, and Animated to be so by *European* Rivals, Planted close by us ; it is impossible to do as we have done in other Countries, and therefore there can be no arguing from the Practice of *France, Spain, Portugal, East-Country, Hamburgh, Russia, Turkey*, or any other Places to *AFRICA*, the Circumstances being perfectly opposite to one another.

Their Arguments against such Creditors as have Purchased their Bonds at a discounted Price, is as Malicious as the other is Ignorant ; but it is past the Power of Imagination that any Man should prove, that because a Man has fairly bought his Property, tho' to some Loss of the Seller, that therefore he is not able in an Incorporated Capacity with other Merchants, to enter into Stipulations of Trade with the Government : This is such gross Arguing, as none but Men driven to their last Shifts would expose themselves to.

'Tis evident the Separate Traders can give no Security but what is Nominal, Supposititious, Precarious, and liable to the Contingency of falling off, whenever the Profits of the Trade may decline : It is evident, an Incorporated Company may be Limited to such Conditions, Subjected to such Performances, and their Capital made liable in Case of Omission, as may be a real and unquestionable Security.

But what a Way of Arguing is this ? The Separate Traders find they can give no Security themselves, and therefore they Recriminate on the Company with Scurrilous Language ; call them Stock-Jobbers, and *Exchange-Alley* Men, and ask them what Security they can give ? Whereas, with Submission, this is not a Question for them to ask, *leave that to the Government, Gentlemen* ; the Government must have Security that the Trade shall be maintain'd : That's an Essential, a Fundamental, and what the Nation must and will stand by : If YOU, *Separate Traders*, cannot give sufficient Security, Your Business is over, *you may walk off* : Then comes the Company, if they cannot give sufficient Security, *they must do the same* ; then the Question must be put to others, and so on to all the Pretenders, till some may be found that are willing and able to do it ; *For the Trade must be Secur'd*, and no Body must be trusted with it, that cannot give the Security demanded.

Now tho' the Security a Company can give, is capable of being made Effectual, and past Question, and all the Queries of this kind may be answer'd that Way ; yet as the Question is not before the Government yet, what Security the Company can offer, but what Security the Separate Traders can offer ; their throwing the Question back to the Company, is playing at Shuttle-cock with the Parliament ; let them come to the Point, and tell the House first, what Security they can give, the Company are ready to shew what Security they have to offer ; and then let the Parliament judge between both ; this is stating the Matter fairly, and above board, the other is all Shifting and Shuffling.

This

This may serve also for an Answer to all their other Invidious Queries, about selling out, or dividing out their Stock, Objections which may as well lie against the Bank of England, the East-India Company, nay, the very Parliament itself, as against the African Company.

Their Insulting Queries are of three sorts, 1. Of the Company's being Bankrupt, and the Hazard of Losing any Stock that shall be join'd to them; 2. Of the Forts and Castles being Useless, or, 3. Of putting them into the Hands of the Government; these we think need no Answer, but in short, thus.

The first being only a heap of ill Language, and want of Decency, the Company desire to Treat it as all Scurrillity and Rudeness deserves, viz. with Silence and Contempt: *The Second*, their, (the Separate Traders,) own Evidence at the House of Commons made them ashamed of, two Years ago; and *the last*, the Government can Answer, better than and Body else.

THE CONCLUSION.

Generals have never in any manner of Reasoning, been allow'd to be a fair Way of Answering Particulars; but these Gentlemen having never been able to speak directly to the Question, endeavour to shuffle it off, by turning it into Banter; it is true, they have so long made a Sport of the Trade, till they have almost lost it to the Nation; but there is very little Mirth in such an awkward Jest; and 'tis hop'd, that whatever they do with the Company, they will not pretend to Banter the Nation out of the Reason and Justice of the Trade to Africa.

For this Reason, tho' the Emptiness of their Queries might be an Answer to themselves, and there needs little more than to Reprint them, lest they should not have made them Publick enough; yet since some People according to Solomon, are to be answer'd in their Folly; lest they think themselves Wise; these brief Remarks are offer'd upon the Separate Traders Queries, and the rest is left to the Judgment of Indifferent Men.

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